

Rep. Peter Welch issued the following statement after the House voted on a budget deal negotiated between the White House and congressional leaders. Welch opposed the measure, which passed by a vote of 269 to 161.

"From the start of this debate, I have been guided by two objectives: First, America must pay its bills. Congress and the President should negotiate, but America should never default. Second, we need a balanced agreement that puts everything on the table.

"While I am pleased that, with this agreement, America will continue to pay its bills, I voted against it because it is not a balanced plan with shared sacrifice. It ignores glaring inequities in the federal tax code while cutting programs important to the middle class, seniors, and low-income Americans. There is simply no excuse for condoning continued tax breaks for Wall Street hedge fund managers, the ethanol industry and big oil companies while the middle class struggles to hang on to their jobs, pay their bills and send their children to college.

"I also voted against this bill because it validates the tactic of putting a gun to the head of the American economy to advance a party's agenda. Never before has a willful majority in Congress held hostage the full faith and credit of the United States of America in order to get its way on the budget. This is a dangerous precedent that will make it more difficult than ever for Congress to meet the many challenges facing our country. It is regrettable that those who employed it have succeeded."